

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, IR, SA, JO
SUBJ: IRAN-SAUDI RELATIONS AND HAWKS FOR JORDAN

REF: (A) TEHRAN 5941 (PARA 6), (B) TEHRAN 6884

1. DURING AUDIENCE FOR SENATOR BIRCH BAYH ON AFTERNOON SEPTEMBER 6, SHAH REFERRED TO IRANIAN RELATIONS WITH SAUDI ARABIA IN THE CONTEXT OF MAKING THE POINT THAT IRAN'S GULF NEIGHBORS HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR FROM HER AND THAT THERE NEED BE NO MILITARY RIVALRY BETWEEN IRAN AND SAUDI ARABIA. SENATOR BAYH WAS INTERESTED IN ASCERTAINING THE SHAH'S OPINION AS TO WHETHER OR NOT SENATE ACTION ON US ARMS SALES TO IRAN AND SAUDI ARABIA COULD BE HANDLED IN SUCH A FASHION THAT THE TWO COUNTRIES WERE NOT LUMPED TOGETHER.

2. SPEAKING ABOUT THE SAUDI ARABIAN LEADERSHIP, THE SHAH ADMITTED THAT IRAN IS HAVING A HARD TIME KNOWING WITH WHOM TO TALK. THE SHAH ADMITTED THAT HE HAD ORIGINALLY THOUGHT THE DECISIONS WOULD BE MADE BY PRINCE FAHD, BUT HE NOW CONCEDES THAT THIS IS APPARENTLY NOT THE CASE. HE POINTED OUT THAT KING KHALID IS A "VERY DECENT MAN", THAT HE INSISTS ON APPROVING EVERYTHING, BUT THAT HE IS INTO A GIVEN SITUATION THEN OUT OF IT TO A DEGREE THAT IS CONFUSING. THE SHAH THEN STATED, "I DID SUCCEED IN DEALING WITH KING KHALID PERSONALLY ON THE SUCCESSFUL

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ARRANGEMENTS MADE FOR SAUDI ARABIA TO PUT UP \$500 MILLION

SO THAT JORDAN COULD BUY AIR DEFENSE MISSILES FROM THE WEST. KING KHALID DID UNDERSTAND THE HAZARD OF HAVING KING HUSSEIN DEAL WITH THE RUSSIANS ON THIS MATTER, AND IT WAS INDEED HE WHO SAW TO IT THAT SAUDI ARABIANS PROVIDED THE NECESSARY FUNDS TO JORDAN." (COMMENT: THIS IS THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE DEATH OF KING FAISAL THAT THE SHAH HAS INDICATED AN UNCERTAINTY ABOUT HOW TO CONDUCT HIS BUSINESS WITH THE SAUDI LEADERSHIP.)

3. THE SHAH WENT OVER FOR SENATOR BAYH'S BENEFIT THE FACT THAT THE SAUDIS NOT ONLY HAVE A REGULAR ARMY BUT ALSO A "WHITE ARMY". HE POINTED OUT THE RIVALRY AMONG THE IMPORTANT PRINCES, AND OPINED THAT THIS PERHAPS HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE FACT THAT NO SINGLE INDIVIDUAL APPEARED TO BE IN CHARGE. THE SHAH DISASSOCIATED HIMSELF FROM ANY IDEA THAT IRAN WAS THE CAUSE OF THE SAUDI DESIRE TO PURCHASE SOPHISTICATED ARMS. HE AGREED WITH SENATOR BAYH THAT THE SAUDIS MIGHT GIVE SOME OF THEIR ARMS TO EGYPT, BUT WITH EQUAL WIEGHT HE POINTED OUT THAT THE ARAB COUNTRIES DID NOT LIKE THE FACT THAT THE UNITED STATES SELLS ADVANCED WEAPONS TO ISRAEL FOR USE AGAINST THE ARABS. THE SHAH REPEATED HIS ASSERTION THAT IRAN WANTED NO TERRITORY IN THE GULF AREA AND WOULD BE FULLY PREOCCUPIED FOR YEARS WITH ITS OWN DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENT. HE INSISTED THAT IRAN WANTS NOTHING BUT PEACE IN THE REGION AND GOOD RELATIONS WITH ITS GULF NEIGHBORS.
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